

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

County: SIERRA

Applicant: TRUCKEE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

Project Title: MERRILL DAVIES STREAM AND MEADOW RESTORATION

Reference Number: SNC 070229

PROJECT SCOPE

The project would treat approximately 36 acres along the stream channel in Merrill and Davies Creeks, restoring function and improving water quality. Merrill and Davies Creeks are in the northeastern part of the Middle Truckee River watershed. These two creeks run through large mountain meadows and form important wetland and aquatic habitat. Ultimately they flow into Stampede Reservoir. The project involves the restoration of hydrologic function and improved meadow, wetland, and riparian habitat. The work to be accomplished under this proposal would restore meadows and stream reaches at three sites in the Merrill Davies basin - a sub-watershed to the Truckee River Watershed. The project would continue work that has already been started on seven other sites within the watershed. Specific activities to successfully complete the project include:

- Re-direct diverted streams into remnant channels to improve water quality and stream function;
- Remove old railroad grades;
- Stabilize and revegetate all disturbed areas;
- Monitor results of restoration activities;
- Involve community in a restoration work day (Truckee River Day).

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Pre-project monitoring to establish baseline vegetation, photo-monitoring and on-going bio-assessment studies	October 2008 - June 2009
Develop RFP for contract, select contractor	June 2009
Complete heavy equipment work and re-vegetation/mulching at project sites	October 2009
Truckee River Volunteer Day	October 2009
Post-project monitoring and photo documentation	March 2010
Final Report/Final Payment Request	April 1, 2010

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Project management	\$10,000
Site restoration work	\$137,000
Monitoring	\$5,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$152,000

Letters of Support:

- None received.

Recommendation:

Staff recommendation is to fund at the requested level of \$152,000.

Project Summary

Provide a summary (one-page maximum) that describes key elements of the project and states the total project cost.

Please type here: Merrill Davies Stream and Meadow Restoration, #070229.

This project is proposed by the Truckee River Watershed Council in a formal partnership with US Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest. The project area is within the Sierraville District. The project will restore 36 acres of meadow, wetland and riparian areas in the Merrill Davies watersheds. These meadow systems are some of the largest in the Truckee River watershed. The area is popular for recreation including fishing, camping, and hiking. This project has received the highest priority ranking by the stakeholders of the Truckee River Watershed Council. All NEPA, CEQA and environmental permitting are completed.

The Merrill Davies watersheds are in the northeastern portion of the Truckee River watershed. These watersheds contain extensive meadow habitat that has been severely degraded through past timber harvest and grazing. Most notably, numerous railroad grades were constructed through the meadows in the early 1900s to support logging. During railroad construction and operation, streams were straightened and/or diverted, leading to severe degradation of meadow habitat, significant increase in active erosion, and decrease in the water table level.

The entire Merrill Davies project has thirteen identified restoration sites; restoration has been completed at seven sites. This proposal addresses restoration at an additional three sites. Restoration goals are to reduce active erosion, reduce the potential for future erosion, improve the quality of surface runoff by improving surface filtration, restore floodplain function, increase flood attenuation potential, increase seasonal groundwater storage, and improve and increase meadow, wetland and riparian habitat.

Restoration activities for the proposed three sites include placing 3,500 feet of diverted streams back onto their original/remnant channels, removing 1,000 feet of old railroad grades which caused the diversions, stabilizing and revegetating all disturbed areas, and monitoring restoration results at all sites. A community restoration work day with 50-75 volunteers is also included.

From 2005 - 2007, restoration work on the completed seven sites included removing 10,125 feet of railroad grade and roads, and restoring 4,550 feet of stream to original channels. Pre- and post- project monitoring of groundwater levels, vegetation, and bioassessment has occurred.

For the three sites in this proposal, the project cost is \$169,500. We have \$17,500 available through in-kind services. The total grant request \$152,000.